

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EUR-12 OES-03

CU-02 CIEP-01 AGR-05 STR-04 DLOS-04 OFA-01 NEA-10

ACDA-05 INT-05 /132 W

----- 009538

R 171900Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8890

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

MTN GENEVA 128

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 3674

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, JM, CU, ETRD

SUBJECT: CUBA/JAMAICA COMMISSION TO MEET IN OCTOBER

REF: KINGSTON 2743

1. ACCORDING TO THE DAILY NEWS, THE CUBAN/JAMAICAN JOINT MIXTED COMMISSION WILL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING IN KINGSTON OCTOBER 15. THE COMMISSION WAS ESTABLISHED DURING THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF PM MANLEY TO CUBA IN JULY. THE FIRST MEETING IS EXPECTED TO FOCUS ON TRADE, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RESPECTIVE TRADE MINISTRIES ARE STUDYING EXPORT/IMPORT FIGURES WITH THE OBJECT OF ESTABLISHING RECIPROCAL TRADE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. COOPERATIVE VENTURES IN SHIPPING AND FISHING ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO BE DISCUSSED.

2. THE ARTICLE STATES THAT THE PROPOSALS PUT BEFORE THE
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COMMISSION HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONTINUOUS TALKS BETWEEN

GOC AND GOJ OFFICIALS, BOTH IN KINGSTON AND HAVANA. BEFORE THE COMMISSION MEETS, PJ. PATTERSON, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM, AND FOREIGN TRADE, IS EXPECTED TO VISIT CUBA FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOC TRADE OFFICIAL MARCELLO FERNANDEZ.

3. COMMENT: SINCE JAMAICA AND CUBA ARE NOT NATURAL TRADING PARTNERS, ANY CHANGES IN TRADE PATTERN ARE LIKELY TO BE FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND AT THE EXPENSE OF EXISTING SUPPLIERS. (AT RECENT "CUBA WEEK" DISPLAY OF CUBAN EXPORTS, PRODUCTS SHOWN WERE COMPARABLE TO JAMAICAN EXPORTS, I.E. RUM, CIGARS, ETC.) GOJ MAY BE CONSIDERING GIVING CUBA SAME FAVORED TREATMENT AS CARICOM MEMBERS OR MAKING COMMODITY ARRANGEMENT SIMILAR TO THAT WITH GUYANA ON RICE. WHEN DOMESTIC SUGAR SUPPLY FELL SHORT IN 1973, GOJ IMPORTED 5,905 TONS FROM CUBA IN BARTER TRANSACTION. 1976 SUGAR CROP ESTIMATE IS ONLY 335,000 TONS, AND GOJ MAY SEEK TO EXPORT ENTIRE AMOUNT IF SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO SUPPLY DOMESTIC MARKET.

4. GOJ ALSO INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT FINDING NEW MARKETS FOR ITS MANUFACTURING SECTOR. TRADE DEFICIT WITH TRINIDAD AND GUYANA CONTINUES TO INCREASE CONTRARY TO EARLY CARIFTA/CARICOM PERIOD WHEN JAMAICA MAIN BENEFICIARY. BETWEEN JANUARY-JUNE 1975 JAMAICA'S IMPORTS FROM CARICOM ROSE 83 PERCENT, COMPARED TO SAME PERIOD IN 1974, WHILE EXPORTS GREW BY ONLY 22 PERCENT. FUEL FROM TRINIDAD AND RICE FROM GUYANA ACCOUNT FOR 65 PERCENT OF TOTAL CARICOM IMPORTS (FUEL J\$16.7 MILLION, RICE J\$14.9 MILLION JANUARY-JUNE 1975). FOR FIRST HALF OF 1975, 42 PERCENT OF FUEL IMPORTS CAME FROM TRINIDAD, AND 931 PERCENT OF RICE IMPORTS FROM GUYANA.

5. ONLY LIMITED INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE HERE ON CUBAN TRADE, BUT IT SEEMS LIKELY GOJ LOOKING FOR EXPORT MARKET AND FOR CHEAP SOURCE OF COMMODITIES AND/OR CAPITAL GOODS. GOJ FOOD IMPORTS ALREADY ESTIMATED AT WELL OVER J\$100 MILLION, AND LICENSES FOR CAPITAL GOODS IMPORT HAVE BEEN CANCELLED BECAUSE OF SKYROCKETING IMPORT BILL NOW EXPECTED TO TOTAL J\$1 BILLION BEFORE YEAR'S END. IF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CUBA BECOMES INTERIM SUPPLIER, IT MAY BE AT EXPENSE OF U.S. TRADE.
GERARD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, FOREIGN TRADE, EMBARGOES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KINGST03674
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750323-0006
From: KINGSTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750944/aaaabmxi.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KINGSTON 2743
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CUBA/JAMAICA COMMISSION TO MEET IN OCTOBER
TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, JM, CU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006